modernization and technology upgradation. As regards high speed passenger corridors, pre-feasibility studies are planned on selected routs. The 11th Plan will be financed through budgetary support, internal resources including surplus generated and extra budgetary resources.

Representation for train services

1373. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL:
SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR:
SHRI VIJAY KUMAR RUPANI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that various organizations/ associations/ unions have since long been representing to increase number of coaches in the trains/ frequency of trains/ introduction of new trains and the Government of Gujarat has been forwarding the same from time to time to the concerned Divisional Manager of Railways for the needful; and

(b) if so, the action taken by railway authorities towards this cause alongwith the present status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Requests are received at various levels of Railway Administration through various sources *e.g.*, Divisional Rail Users Consultative Committee, Zonal Rail Users Consultative Committee and various Organizations/ Associations/ Unions. The requests are examined and action as found feasible and justified is taken.

Following additional services have been provided during 2007-08 and 2008-09 (till date) serving the State of Gujarat:-

1. 14 pairs of new trains have been introduced and, frequency of 09 pairs of trains has been increased.

2. 160 coaches have been permanently augmented on 64 well patronised trains. Besides, 148 coaches have been attached on day to day basis in different trains to clear extra rush of passenger traffic.

Earning by selling of railway land

1374. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the earning by selling railway land in each of the metros during the last three years;

(b) what are the heads under which the earning is proposed to be utilized; and

(c) what precautions are being taken to preserve Railways' own development while entering into PPP?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Railways have no policy of outright sale of land as such there is no earning from sale of land. However, Railways have a policy to consider request for long term leasing of railway land, if sparable, to State Governments/Public Sector Undertakings.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The basic objective of the public private partnership initiatives is to strengthen the Railway's infrastructure and improve services to customers. These do not entail any dilution of the public sector character of Railways and compromise of Government's interests.

The guidelines and interministerial appraisal/approval laid down by Government in this regard are fully adhered to.

Agreement between Indian railways and Iran's railway company

1375. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Wili the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Iran have signed an agreement that would help establish a new rail link between Iran and Russia;

(b) if so, whether MoU was signed by the Chairman, Indian Railway Board and Iran's Railway Company; and

(c) if so, what are main features of the agreement reached and by when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Gauge conversion

1376. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has undertaken the work of gauge conversion in different States; and

(b) if so, how many railway lines would be converted into broad gauge during Eleventh Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Target for gauge conversion of 10000 Km of meter gauge / narrow gauge lines to broad gauge has been fixed for XI Plan.

World class railway stations and budget hotels

1377. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railways has announced for developing world class stations in the country in the identified railway land;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd (IRCTC) is developing budget hotels on idle railway land in the country;